

Hashem's Compassion!

THE ICE-CREAM LOOKING LIVER!

Recently, I was sitting at a friend's Shabbos Sheva Brachos, and the father of the *chosson* was speaking. During the speech, his grandchild started throwing a tantrum. It was obvious what he wanted—the “ice cream” that was just then being served to the head table. The boy wanted it, and he figured that the only, if not best, way to get it without waiting until after his grandfather's speech was by throwing a full-blown tantrum. And so he did.

Seeing what was going on, the father of the *chosson* interrupted his speech to tell the boy's father to give him some. With that, the father gave his son from the “ice cream.”

The boy was in for a surprise, for what he thought was ice cream was actually the Shabbos morning chopped liver! He took one bite and spat it all out. “P...e...c...h... I don't like this,” he declared. “This was not what I was expecting!”

This lesson can be served to adults, too. There are times in life that we cry and scream to Hashem like this child for something we really want, and we don't see our *tefillas* getting answered. We beg for this and that, assuming it's going to taste great like ice cream. So why isn't Hashem giving it to us? Because it's actually the “liver” that Hashem is sparing us from. Hashem is sparing us from something He knows we're not going to like.¹



SHABBOS WITH THE MAHARIL

In every situation that we encounter, we must remember that Hashem is at our side, taking care of us and looking out for our best interest. With this perception, we will find comfort in every situation that we encounter.

There's a mind-blowing story that illuminates this idea very well:

In the time when the Maharil Diskin, *zt"l*, was the Rav of Brisk, there was an unfortunate bout of *chillul Shabbos* proliferating in the city. The residents of the city went out one Shabbos night to hold a large *hafganah*, protest. However, since their *hafganah* had not been

approved by the authorities, the police quickly dissipated the crowd, arrested the leader, and brought him to the precinct.

The leader of the *hafganah* was led to a dark, enclosed room, and he sat there on Shabbos with no wine, challah, or any part of his regular Shabbos meal. Not only that, but his thoughts were soured by his worrying what charges and punishments he would face in court...

But his sorrow didn't last too long. After about two hours, the door to his cell opened, and the Rav of the city, the Maharil Diskin himself, was being led to sit in prison along with him. From that point, the man's sadness disappeared. To him, it was worth staying in the dark without challah and wine to be able to spend one Shabbos in the presence of the Maharil Diskin.

This serves as a *mashal* for us. When one is faced with what seems a very black darkness, once one realizes that Hashem is with him, as it says in *Tehillim* that Hashem is with one during his *tzarah*, then one is comforted with the greatest light. Hashem's appearance brings light and joy.



HASHEM'S COMPASSION

A relative of R' Yitzchak Eizek Sher had fallen and broke her foot, and she was very disturbed about it. She was the mother of a bustling family, and now she was tied up in bed. This put her in a real down, and so R' Eizek felt that he must pay a visit to her, so he went and did *bikur cholim*.

R' Eizek asked her if she had memories from when she gave birth to her children, and she replied that she did.

“Are they pleasant memories?” R' Eizek asked her.

“Yes, they are,” she responded.

“But I don't understand, didn't you undergo a lot of pain? Why do you have good memories of it?”

“Following the pain, I got to hold my dear, precious child. Therefore, the entire process gives me good memories.”

¹ One very important point to clarify: In no such way does this mean that one should daven less when faced with a challenge. In every situation that we find ourselves facing, Hashem primarily wants us to turn to him and daven. Instead, the lesson here is that

regarding the past and the present situations in which one doesn't see the *yeshuah*, it is there where we must remember that everything is for our best, and anything otherwise wouldn't be for our best interest.

"That's the same here," continued R' Eizek. "Just know that this will bring you good things. Unlike childbirth, though, in which you see the fruit of your pain immediately after, when one's going through a tough situation, though they don't necessarily see it, they know that it's there. The fact that you don't see it as clearly as you see when you have a child isn't a reason for you to not be happy. You too have to know that this is for your very best, and be happy that it is so."

This is a very important lesson. Although at times we don't see the good results, we must know that they're there but just concealed. All that Hashem does is for our very best interest, and even if it's not known, we must remember the truth. (*Aleinu Lishabei'ach*, vol. 1, p. 384)



"LET'S NOT BE APIKORSIM!"

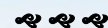
R' Zalman Brazil was known to be a very happy individual. In every situation, he was seen happy and joyous.

One story that illustrates this happened when he was visiting his son-in-law's house in his old age. He had a hard time walking then, so they ordered a taxi to bring him back home.

The taxi pulled up to the door but didn't see him, so he figured that R' Zalman must be waiting by the other entrance on the opposite side of the building, so he zipped around the corner to meet him.

In the meantime, R' Zalman hadn't seen the taxi, and thus assumed that he was still going to come to the front. With his fragile body and walker, he slowly made his way to the front. Not seeing him there, he assumed the driver had gone to the side entrance, and he started to make his way over to there. However, when the taxi driver didn't see R' Zalman by the side, he assumed that he must have not come down yet, so he decided that he would wait at the original stop.

This happened several times—R' Zalman painstakingly going to where the taxi had moved to, all in good spirit despite his physical struggle. While he was doing all this, he turned to his accompanying grandchild and said, "Let's not be *apikorsim*. We must remember that this is the will of Hashem, and not think that this is a coincidence." With that, he started dancing and saying, "This is the will of Hashem, and we must rejoice over this." (Conveyed by his grandson, R' Moshe Landau)



ATTACHED TO A STRING FROM ABOVE

It's told about R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, the Rav of Yerushalayim, that despite several of his children being *niftar* during his life, he was never seen as being broken.

They asked him, "How were you able to be so happy during such times? Not only are you not let down, but you're constantly happy. How?"

He responded: "Generally, when an earthquake occurs, everyone starts running here and there. But that isn't so smart, is it? Will it help to run here or there? How does anyone know that it will be any better where they're running to? Perhaps it might be even worse there, so what makes them run?"

"The real solution to being protected during an earthquake is to tie a strong string from above and to hold on tight. Doing this will ensure that whatever comes your way won't affect you."

This is what protects a person during hard times—when he doesn't know where to run, he doesn't know if here is better than there, or vice versa. By being tied to a solid rope connected from up on top, i.e., to Hashem, will ensure that any shaking "earthquake" won't push him down.



YOU ALWAYS CAN BE HAPPY!

A man once shared his troubles with Reb Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, zt"l. Reb Shlomo Zalman assured him that despite his problems, happiness was within his reach. The man protested, claiming that it was impossible for someone enduring his suffering to be happy. It was simply too difficult for him to see the good.

Reb Shlomo Zalman responded, "I know someone who, after an operation, is deaf in one ear. He is also a widower, r"l. Three of his children are childless. Despite his tribulations, he is always cheerful and smiling."

The man disbelieved the story. "How can he be happy after suffering so much?"

Reb Shlomo Zalman revealed that he was referring to himself. He had endured this situation and nevertheless was always happy.

"When an earthquake strikes, everyone runs... How do they know that there it'll be any better?"